

REMARKS

The Examiner's Action mailed on December 21, 2004 has been received and its contents carefully considered.

In this Amendment, Applicants have editorially amended claims 1, 3, 9, 11 and 12. Claims 1, 3 and 9 are the independent claims. Claims 1-14 remain pending in the application. For at least the following reasons, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance.

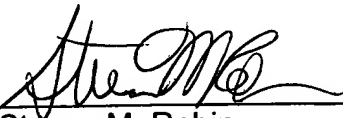
The Examiner has objected to claims 11 and 12 for informalities related to numbering of the steps. In response thereto, claims 11 and 12 have been amended according to the Examiner's suggestions. Moreover, amendments to claims 1, 3 and 9 have been made to correct inadvertent informalities of a grammatical nature that are unrelated to patentability. Thus, the objections should be withdrawn.

Applicants note with appreciation that the Examiner has indicated that claims 1-14 would be allowed if rewritten to overcome the objections noted in the Office Action. As noted above, claims 11 and 12 have been amended accordingly. It is therefore respectfully submitted that the application is now in condition for allowance, and such a Notice, with allowed claims 1-14, earnestly is solicited.

Should the Examiner feel that a conference would help to expedite the prosecution of the application, the Examiner is hereby invited to contact the undersigned counsel to arrange for such an interview.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date


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Amendment

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